

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6571

S E C R E T BRUSSELS 09383

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DEPT PASS INFO TO PARIS, KINSHASA, LUBUMBASHI, SECDEF
AND WHITE HOUSE

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: MAPS, PINS, CACS, CG

SUBJECT: SHABA INCURSION - POSSIBLE RESCUE EFFORT:
BELGIAN DEMARCHE

REF: A) STATE 125187, B) BRUSSELS 9311

1. BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHEF DE CABINET, ALFRED CAHEN, CALLED ON ADCM EARLY MORNING MAY 17 TO INFORM US THAT BELGIAN GOVERNMENT DECIDED PREVIOUS EVENING TO HAVE OPERATIONAL PLAN PREPARED IN CASE IT BECOMES NECESSARY TO MOUNT RESCUE OPERATION AT KOLWEZI. CAHEN STRESSED THAT BELGIANS WISH TO COORDINATE PLANNING CLOSELY WITH FRENCH AND U.S. CAHEN SAID BELGIAN THINKING PRECISELY PARALLELS THAT OUTLINED IN REF A.

2. CAHEN SAID THAT PRIME MINISTER TINDEMANS, VICE PRIME MINISTER HUREZ, FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET, MINISTER VANDEN BOEYNANTS AND MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION CHABERT PARTICIPATED IN MAY 16 MEETING TO DISCUSS SITUATION IN ZAIRE AND POSSIBLE BELGIAN ACTIONS (REF B). HE SAID OTHER MEETINGS HAVE BEEN TAKING PLACE AT

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TECHNICALS LEVELS. HE SHOWED US LATEST TELEGRAMS RECEIVED FROM BELGIAN CONSULATE GENERAL IN LUBUMBASHI BASED IN PART ON TELEPHONE REPORTS FROM KOLWEZI (FROM TWO OR THREE BELGIANS RESIDENT THERE) BEFORE LINES WERE CUT 1745 MAY 16. TELEGRAMS DESCRIBED PANICKY SITUATION, WITH INVADING TROOPS INVITING POPULATION TO PARTICIPATE IN PILLAGING. BELGIANS HAVE NAMES OF

THREE BELGIANS AND ONE ITALIAN WHO HAVE BEEN KILLED,
AND THINK OTHERS ALSO PROBABLY HAVE BEEN KILLED.

3. CAHEN EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE PUZZLEMENT RE SITUATION
IN KOLWEZI, WONDERING WHY INVADERS HAVE NOT TRIED TO
PENETRATE FURTHER AND WHY THEIR TROOPS ARE SO UNDISCIPLINED. "IF THEY ARE TRAINED BY CUBANS, THEY ARE NOT
TRAINED VERY WELL."

4. CAHEN SAID HE HAD SPOKEN WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR
HURE LAST NIGHT AFTER MINISTERIAL MEETING. REGARDING
COORDINATION OF POSSIBLE RESCUE OPERATION, HURE SAID
FIRST QUESTIONS ARE WHO IS TO COORDINATE, WHEN, AND
WHERE. NEXT WOULD COME, HOW. HURE IS TO GET BACK
TO BELGIANS TODAY AFTER GETTING INSTRUCTIONS FROM
PARIS.

5. CAHEN SAID BELGIANS HAVE ALSO BEEN IN CONTACT
WITH BRITISH EMBASSY HERE REGARDING SITUATION IN
SHABA. BRITISH, HE SAID, SAY THERE ARE 21 UK
CITIZENS AND THREE COMMONWEALTH IN KOLWEZI. HE REPEATED
HIS UNDERSTANDING (REF B) THAT THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY
2,000 BELGIANS IN KOLWEZI AND GAVE FIGURE OF 400
FRENCH. HE SAID THERE ALSO ARE SOME ITALIANS.

6. EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR INFORMATION PROVIDED
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REF A AND SAYING BELGIANS LOOKED FORWARD TO WORKING
CLOSELY WITH US IN COORDINATING CONTINGENCY PLANNING,
HE SAID THAT HE WOULD GET BACK TO US LATER TODAY.
CHAMBERS

NOTE BY OC/T; NOT PASSED PARIS,KINSHASA,LUBUMBASHI,SECDEF,WHITE HOUSE.

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